

A STUDY OF LIVING CONDITIONS AND CHURCH LIFE AMONG  
NEGROES IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA  
TO SHOW THE EFFECT OF THE CHURCH  
UPON LIVING CONDITIONS .

A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Committee on Graduate Studies  
Gammon Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Sacred Theology

By  
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This Thesis is Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
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In no respect, however, are any of the above responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation which may appear in this study. For these the writer takes full responsibility.

Howard Cunningham

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The rural community and church have been frequently neglected for the urban community. This study will aim to look into the status of the Negro farmer and his relation to his church in one county.

A study of this nature is important and necessary because the Negro church is principally owned and governed by Negroes, and it is the most potent institution of its kind within the race, and is still unsurpassed by any other agency in its capacity for reaching the masses of colored people. "The Negro church is the greatest institution developed by Negroes on the American soil. ... It has had more influence in molding the thought and life of the Negro people than any other single agency. And until comparatively recent years, the Negro church was predominantly a rural church."<sup>1</sup>

Records show that there has been a steady decline not only in rural church membership, but in participation in church activities. There is a difference of opinion regarding the reasons for the very limited participation of members in the rural church. Many and varied reasons have been given, however, only limited observations have been made, and in no known instance has experimental evidence been gathered to ascertain the reasons for the limited participation in church activities in Laurens County, South Carolina

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<sup>1</sup>Harry V. Richardson, Dark Glory, New York Friendship Press, 1947, p. xi (Foreword)

## I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the Problem. The problem with which this study is concerned is to describe (1) the living conditions and the church life of the rural Negro in Laurens County, South Carolina, and (2) to show the effect, if any, of the Church upon the living conditions of fifty Negro landowners and fifth non-landowners of the County.

Importance of the Study. The importance of this study is found in the fact that tenancy and the poor use of land result in low income and standard of living. These affect the church. In each case the church suffers because its members are suffering. "Thus the church has not only less in the way of financial resources, but has to depend on weaker families for its support."<sup>2</sup> Weak support of the church means poor ministerial support. The minister often has to be employed by several churches and, in many cases, engages in some occupation or trade, or may be employed as a day laborer. Some rural ministers (all in this particular study) do not live in the communities which they serve. This absenteeism robs the church members of intelligent and constant leadership, of many church activities, and the companionship and fellowship of their spiritual leader, the pastor.

Naturally some farmers take better care of the soil than others. Probably the pride of landownership gives the farmer initiative to invest the best of his ingenuity and skill into making the soil yield its

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<sup>2</sup>Rockwell Smith, The Church In Our Town.  
New York, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1945, p. 72.

utmost, and as a result, such a farmer has a higher income, a better standard of living, and is more stable. He thereby is able to make a more significant contribution to his church and community.

The main purpose of the study is to see the difference, if any, between landowners and tenants in regard to standard of living and their contributions to the church life of the community. The writer feels there is a direct relationship between landownership, standard of living, and participation in church activities.

The writer will endeavor to show that (1) Negro landowners are more stable, and have a higher standard of living than non-landowners; and (2) Negro landowners with a higher standard of living, participate more in church life than those with a lower standard of living. The landowner is more stable and has more resources from which to contribute. However, this does not mean that the landowner always functions to the optimum of his ability in church work.

Subjects and Materials. The subjects and materials involved in this study were as follows:

- A. Subjects: The 100 selected farm families (Negro) in Laurens County, South Carolina.  
The Negro Farm Agent, and 16 pastors of the rural churches in the county.
- B. Materials: The materials used in this study were: (1) a specifically designed schedule pertinent to the needed data, (2) official church and convention records or minutes, and (3) focused interviews with key individuals in the rural churches of the county.

Method of Research. The Normative-Survey Method of research, utilizing the questionnaire method, official records and focused interviews, was employed to collect the pertinent data required in this study.

Methods of Procedure. The steps in the procedure in carrying



forward this research briefly summarized are:

1. The related literature pertinent to this study was reviewed, summarized and organized, and used in the making of this study.
2. Most of the data were collected directly from farmers of Laurens County.
3. Other data were procured by personal focused interviews with the county agent and pastors serving the communities under investigation.
4. The schedule check-list which had been designed and validated to serve the needed data was administered to all farmers under investigation. The check list used contained questions under the following general headings: Family, soil practices, live-stock, home, interest, income, social organization, and family religion. Under the heading of family religion were six questions dealing with church activities and participation.
5. The personal observation method was used in getting material on farmers and some of the activities of the churches. At various times, the writer attended church services, and visited rural homes in the county. Much time was spent in association and conversation with all types of Negro farmers in Laurens County, the county in which the writer was born and has lived for more than two decades. However, in attempting to bring together and interpret the subject matter, the writer has endeavored not to enforce a personal view, but to handle the material as objectively and dispassionately as possible.
6. The data collected through these instruments were arranged in appropriate tables, to facilitate the statistical treatment upon which the analysis and interpretation were based.

Limitations. Although the scope of this study is limited to Laurens County, South Carolina, the fact of its limitation to this particular area is not intended to convey the impression that the problems of the rural Negro farmers presented are particular to Laurens County alone. Problems similar to those of the farm families in Laurens County may be found to exist on many farms in the South, and especially in the Deep South.

The very nature of this study admits of certain limitations which

are listed as follows:

1. Most farmers do not keep financial records of income, losses, expenditures and net income.
2. Rural churches, especially Baptist, do not keep accurate records of church membership, because it is not required.
3. The study involved only 100 Negro farmers by random sample in sixteen rural communities of the county during the Spring and Summer of 1951.

Some information secured on the schedule was given gladly, but many questions concerning income were answered reluctantly and with a degree of uncertainty in tone. Many times the interviewer would have to quote a figure based on cotton acreage, as a criterion, as a starting point for the farmer to come to some reckoning figure.

It is not possible, therefore, always to speak with finality and assurance. Too much data is uncertain and incomplete. And, yet, there is enough, as will presently be seen, to form a reference, on which to base conclusions and recommendations.

## II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Standard of Living. Standard of living is a term used to describe how people live, what they have, and the goods and services available for their consumption. It may be measured by such criteria as food, clothing, housing, household equipment, health facilities, and the total mode of living, such as the use of electric facilities, and other conveniences.

The index of the possession of these goods and services may be based on income. However, the mere expenditure of money does not necessarily constitute a desirable or satisfactory indication of living.

In trying to study the standard of living of these farm families,

some units or items had to be used as measurements of standard of living. Thirty-three items were used to indicate the standard of living. (See Table IV , Items Indicating the Standard of Living, p.42 )

Church Activities, denotes all the functions, religious or social, of any organization within the sphere of the church program. The church school, worship service, prayer meeting, choir, boards or auxiliaries, rallies, special projects, civic and social services are all included.

The term "church" used in this thesis as defined by Mays and Nicholson in the Negro's Church: "... a place where a group of people assemble for worship, .... to sing, pray, and have preaching."<sup>3</sup>

### III. RELATED SUBJECTS

As far as the writer has been able to determine, this is the first study of its kind that has been made of the Negro farmers in Laurens County, South Carolina.

However, pertinent literature used in this study is reviewed in the following paragraphs:

(1) Dr. T. S. Buie of the South Carolina Soil Conservation Service made a study of 222 rural Methodist Churches in the central Piedmont section of South Carolina in 1944.

Dr. Buie was concerned with the poor physical and financial conditions of the rural churches which were minimizing the importance of the rural church in the community. He said, "In the early days, and in fact until recently, it (the rural church) was the center of the community life and activity; but changing conditions have had the effect of mini-

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<sup>3</sup>Benjamin E. Mays and Joseph W. Nicholson, The Negro's Church, Institute of Social and Religious Research, New York, 1933. p. 199.

mizing the importance of the rural church.<sup>4</sup> Chief among these conditions was soil erosion, which caused human erosion in terms of income. Farm income is derived from products of the soil and as productivity of the soil decreases, income shrinks.

The 222 rural churches were classified into three groups according to soil conditions surrounding the church: moderate erosion, moderate to severe erosion, and severe erosion. Membership, per capita giving, and pastors' salary were higher in the moderately eroded areas than where erosion was more severe.

The poor physical and financial conditions of the rural churches were due to the poor conditions of the soil. In short, the church suffers because the people were suffering. Poor, eroded land means land from which the people can at best get only a scanty living.

(2) Dr. Ralph A. Felton, of the Rural Church Department, Drew University, has made several studies of the rural church and ministry throughout the South. These studies of the rural ministry were made under the joint auspices of the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the Home Missions Council of North America. They are: These My Brethren, which is a study of 570 Negro Churches and 1542 Negro homes in the rural South; One Foot On The Land, a story of sixteen successful rural churches, and Go Down Moses. This bulletin deals with examples of successful rural churches and what can be done to help Negro rural farmers.

Of especial interest is the pamphlet The Church And The Land<sup>5</sup> by

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<sup>4</sup>T. S. Buie, "The Land and the Rural Church," Rural Sociology University of Louisiana, Baton Rouge: 251-256, Vol. 19. September, 1944.

<sup>5</sup>Ralph A. Felton, The Church And The Land, 1947.

Ralph Felton, published 1947. Dr. Felton concerned himself with soil practices, farm income and standard of living of 412 farm families in six Southern states, (Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee). These three factors were studied and discussed separately, and then correlated to show the relationship of each to the other.

(3) An assiduous study made by Dr. Harry V. Richardson (1947) in a book entitled \*Dark Glory,\*<sup>6</sup> which is a full length study devoted solely to the rural Negro church. Dr. Richardson made a complete study of 107 rural Negro churches and 102 rural Negro pastors in four selected counties of four different states in the South. (Dallas County, Alabama; Calhoun County, South Carolina; Mississippi County, Arkansas; and Northcumberland County, Virginia).

Dark Glory is a picture of the church among Negroes in the rural South and deals with the total aspect of the rural Negro Church and its Ministers.

(4) An unpublished Master's thesis, - A Survey of Laurens County by Clara Louise Simmons (1925).

This study is a general survey of Laurens County, South Carolina. It deals primarily with the public school system of that county and the adverse effect of the high tenancy rate upon the school system.

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<sup>6</sup>Harry V. Richardson, Dark Glory, Home Missions Council of North America, Friendship Press, New York, 1947.

Figure 1. Map of South Carolina Showing Location of Laurens County

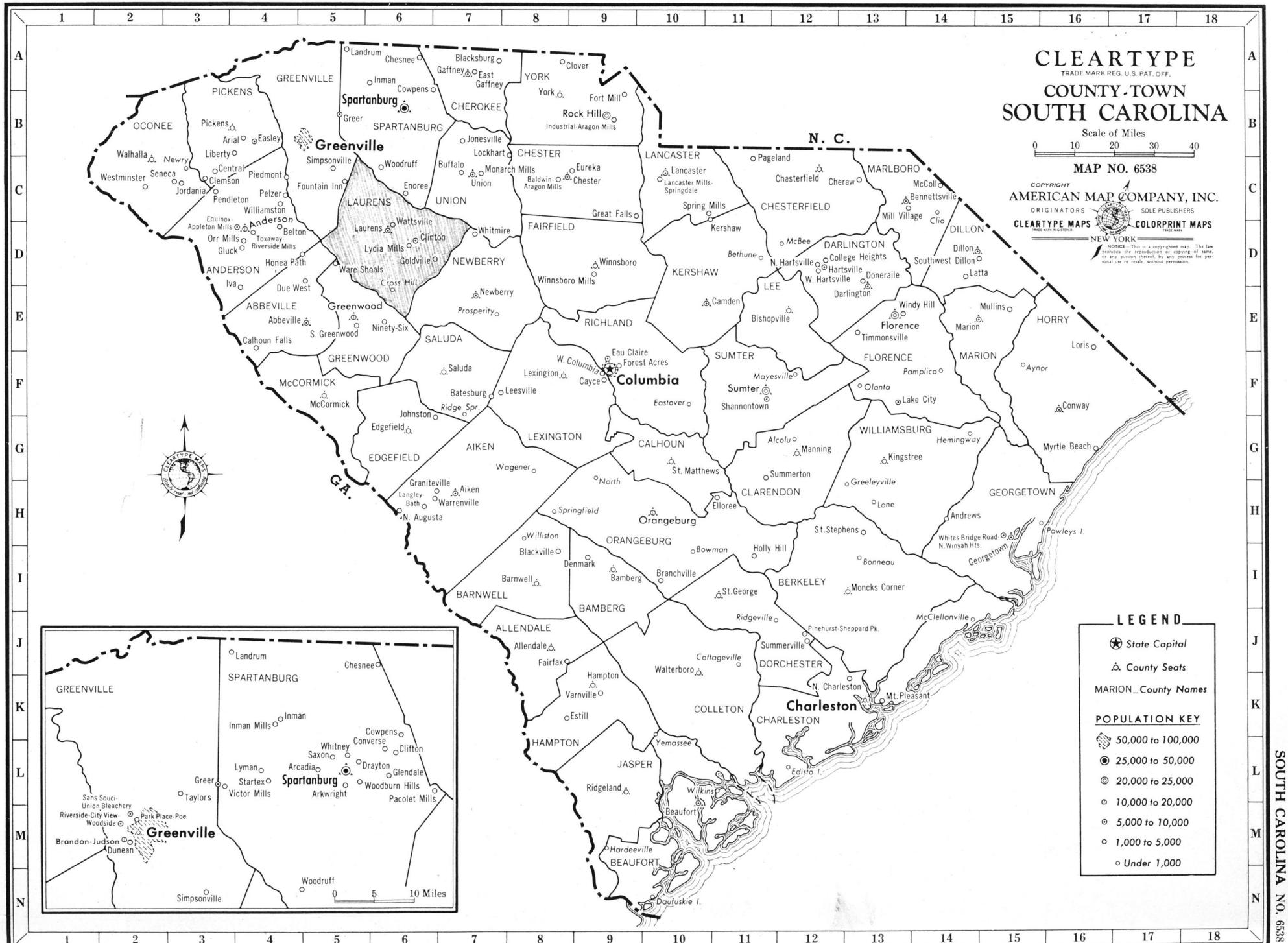
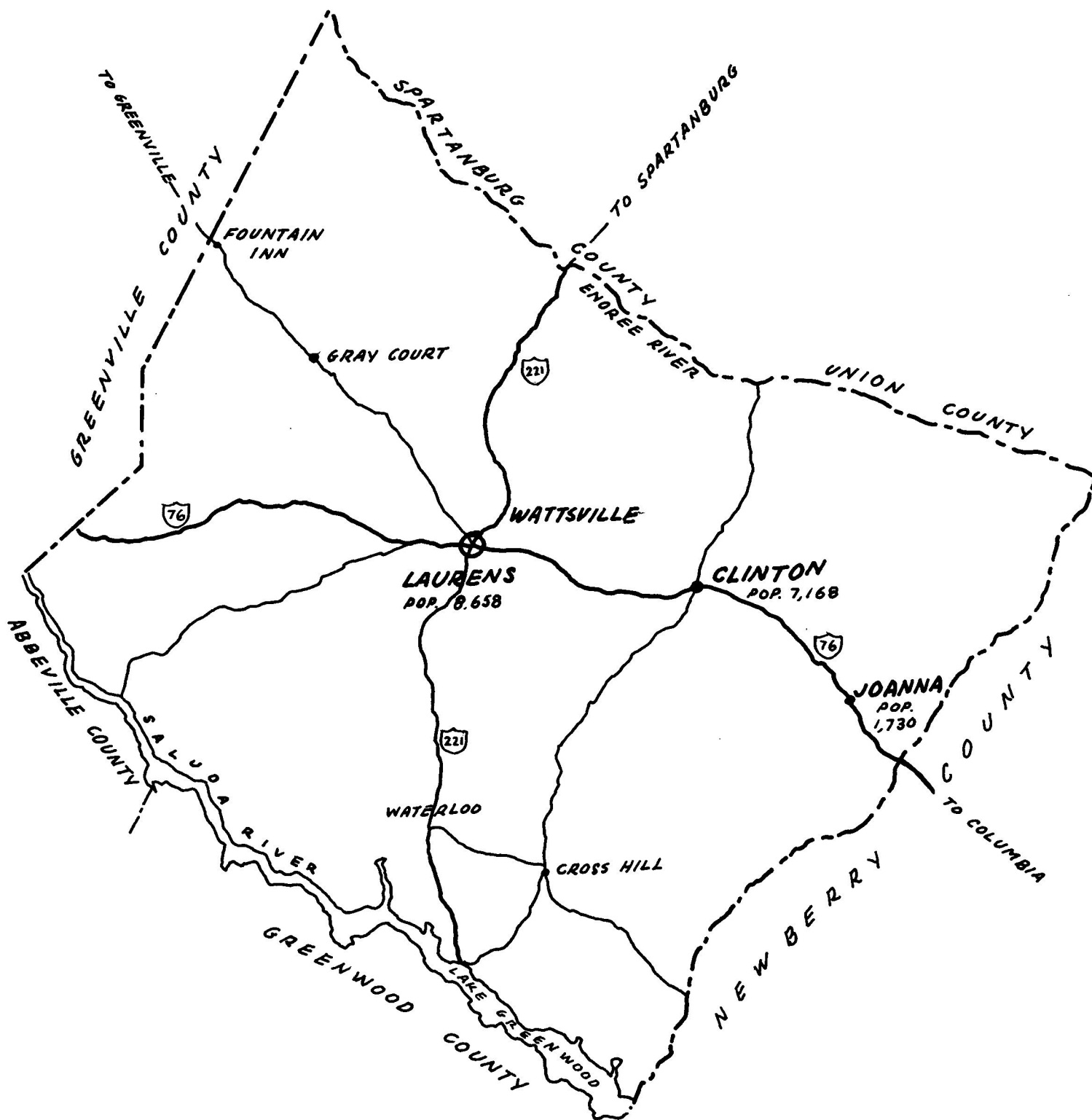


FIGURE 2. SKETCH OF LAURENS COUNTY SHOWING UNIVERSE OF  
STUDY, 1951



## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Laurens County is situated in the hills of Western South Carolina, in the central Piedmont Plateau. Laurens, the county seat, is situated on Little River and is known as the "Center of the Piedmont." It was founded in 1880, and named in the honor of John Laurens, a Revolutionary officer.<sup>1</sup>

Laurens County is bounded on the northwest by Greenville County, on the northeast by Spartanburg and Union Counties, and by Greenwood and Abbeville Counties on the southwest. The Enoree and Saluda Rivers form the northwest and southwest boundaries, respectively.

In area, Laurens County ranks nineteenth in size among the counties of the state, with 701 square miles. Berkley County, the largest of the forty six, has an area of 1,238 square miles, while Cherokee, the smallest, has only 373 square miles. The average elevation of Laurens County is 589 feet. The county has a land area of 456,320 acres, of which 76.6 per cent is farmland.

The climate is temperate. The mean annual temperature is 67.75 degrees Fahrenheit; the mean maximum temperature 75.05 degrees; the mean minimum 49.4 degrees.

The county has a growing season of 218 days per year, and the average rainfall during the growing season is 42.18 inches. The annual

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<sup>1</sup>Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 13, p. 770.



rainfall is 47.64 inches, and the snowfall 4.35 inches.<sup>2</sup>

The surface is the rolling upland, possessing for the most part red soil capable of producing several varieties of crops. The county consists of several types of soil. In the section lying between the Saluda River and the town of Laurens, the predominating soil is Cecil sandy loam, consisting of gray sandy loam overlying a stiff red clay subsoil. It is easy to cultivate, but the effect of fertilizers is not lasting, and it requires much attention to keep it in a state of productiveness. The soil in the western section of the county toward the Abbeville and Greenville County lines is the Cecil clay loam. It varies from stiff clay to a red loam, with a red clay subsoil. This soil is adapted to almost any crop and requires less attention than the Cecil sandy loam.

There is a very small amount of Durham sandy loam, and a small amount of Iredell clay loam. Union County on the Laurens County line shows a predominance of Cecil fine sandy loam and Cecil clay loam, with a small amount of meadow soil. Newberry on the Laurens border shows Cecil sandy clay predominating, with some broken phases and some Appling sandy loam. The Cecil loam soils, therefore, are evidently the chief soils of Laurens County.<sup>3</sup>

Laurens County has two major population centers, Laurens, population 8,658, and Clinton, population 7,168. Clinton lies eight miles southeast of Laurens. There are three towns with population over 1,000

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<sup>2</sup>United States Census of Population, South Carolina, -B-B40. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1940.

<sup>3</sup>Clara Louise Simmons, "A Survey of Laurens County" Unpublished Master's Thesis, "The University of South Carolina, p. 17. Quoted from F.W. Taylor & T. D. Rice, Soil Survey of Abbeville Area, pp. 273-289.

within the bounds of the county. They follow in order of population: Clinton 1,168, Joanna (Goldville) 1,730 and Wattsville 1,649. The chief trade center is Greenville, (population 58,161).

The chief industries of these population centers are cottonseed oil, rayon, hosiery, livestock feeds and glass factories (bottle making). The Laurens Glass Works is the only industry of its kind in South Carolina, and the largest soft bottle drink factory in the South. It makes about 150,000 bottles per year.<sup>4</sup>

Population Distribution. Laurens County has a Negro population of 14,504 persons, which comprises 31.1 per cent of the total population of the county. The Negro population is concentrated in the rural areas of the county. There are 69.7 per cent of the Negroes living in "open country" of the county. 1,749 Negro families make their living wholly from farming.

The age and sex pyramid of the distribution of Negroes in Laurens County shows that the fertility rate is high among Negroes in the county. This is not unusual for rural Negroes in the South. According to Dr. T. Lynn Smith, "the fertility rate among rural Negroes in the South is the highest in the nation. The net reproduction rate of rural farm Negroes is 2,058 children under five for every one thousand women aged 20 - 44. The net reproduction rate in the United States is 978 per thousand women."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Greenville News, February 12, 1956, p. 17.

<sup>5</sup>T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life, Revised edition Harper and Brothers, New York: 1947, p. 142.

**FIGURE 3.** THE AGE AND SEX PYRAMID OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF  
NEGROES IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA 1950

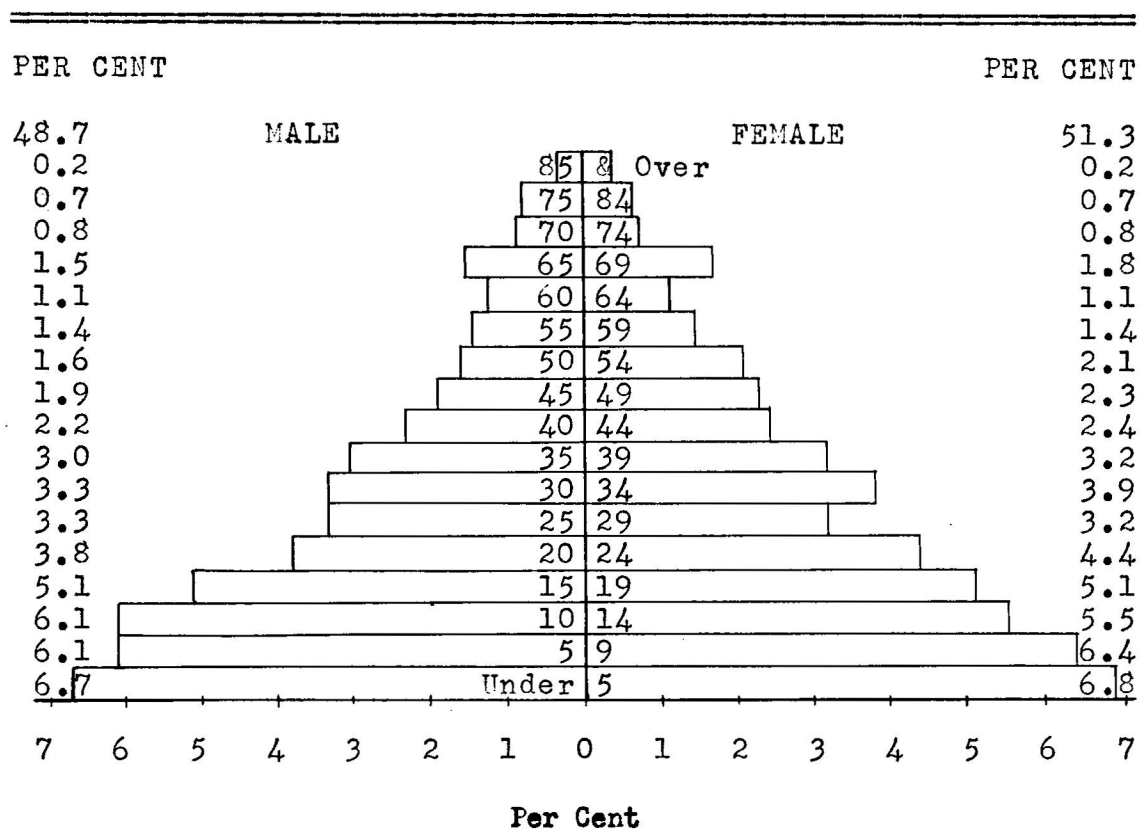


TABLE I: SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF NON-WHITE POPULATION OF  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950

Ages	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent of Total
Under 5 yrs.	1,992	13.5	983	6.7	1,009	6.8
5 - 9	1,828	12.5	892	6.1	936	6.4
10 - 14	1,717	11.6	894	6.1	823	5.5
15 - 19	1,480	10.2	749	5.1	731	5.1
20 - 24	1,205	8.2	541	3.8	664	4.4
25 - 29	1,060	6.5	487	3.3	573	3.9
30 - 34	857	7.2	380	3.3	477	3.2
35 - 39	908	6.2	430	3.0	478	3.2
40 - 44	670	4.6	316	2.2	354	2.4
45 - 49	629	4.2	283	1.9	346	2.3
50 - 54	542	3.7	239	1.6	303	2.1
55 - 59	418	2.8	209	1.4	209	1.4
60 - 64	303	2.2	152	1.1	151	1.1
65 - 69	497	3.3	223	1.5	274	1.8
70 - 75	233	0.16	118	0.8	115	0.8
75 - 84	208	0.14	106	0.7	102	0.7
85 and over	57	0.4	20	0.2	37	0.2
Total	14,604	100.0	7,022	48.3	7,582	51.7

The age and sex pyramid of the Negro population of Laurens County also shows that 37.6 per cent of the population are under 15 years of age. The fertility ratio is 1332 per thousand women. (Hf - 1000:370: 3600-1332). The Negro population is increasing in spite of the migration of young adult Negroes to urban areas.

Number of children under 5 years of age per 1000 women<sup>6</sup>  
Number of women ages 16 - 44 in population

Thirteen and one-half per cent of the population are under 5 years old, and thirty seven and six-tenths per cent under 15 years of age. The pyramid does not shape up in a true pyramid or cone shape form because of the small number of persons in the 30 - 45 age group. There are only 18.0 per cent in this age group. A comparative study of any large city would show that the city has many in the productive years of life (20 - 45) whereas, the farm is burdened with those of the dependent ages (under 15 and over 60). There is a bulge in the population of persons 60 years old and over. Therefore, it can be stated that the population is composed chiefly of children and aged people. This is typical of any agricultural community. As T. Lynn Smith states in the Composition of the Population, Chapter V: "The country population includes large proportions of children; (2) the rural population has a low percentage of its population in the ages 15 - 45, i.e., the productive years of life; (3) the country contains a disproportionately large share of aged persons."<sup>7</sup>

The sex composition of the Negro population of Laurens County

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid, p. 153.

<sup>7</sup>T. Lynn Smith, The Sociology of Rural Life. Harper Brothers, New York: 1948, p. 74.

shows that there is a higher percentage of females in the total population, 51.3 per cent of the total. This is a natural selective factor. There are always more females living than males, despite the slight lead of males over females born per year. The female infant mortality rate is lower than the male in any population. In the rural farm population, the Negro male predominates slightly. There are 7,233 rural farm males, and 7,024 rural farm females in Laurens County. This is the natural trend of all races in America in any farming locality. This difference is produced wholly by the fact that a greater proportion of females than of males migrate from the farm. "Agriculture does not offer women as much in the way of vocational opportunity as it offers men, and farm-reared girls .... often migrate to villages, towns, or cities in order to find gainful employment."<sup>8</sup>

Educational Attainments. The percentage of adults 25 years of age and older that completed high school in Laurens County is 7.3 per cent.<sup>9</sup> The Negro (adults of 25 years of age and older) has a 4.6 per cent average in the county. Figure 4 shows that 10.2 per cent of the Negroes in the county did not complete any grade in school. Of the total per cent (73.9 per cent) that attended elementary school, only 5.1 per cent completed elementary school. A total of 6.5 per cent attended high school but a mere 0.9 per cent completed high school.<sup>10</sup> In short, less than one per cent of the total population completed high school.

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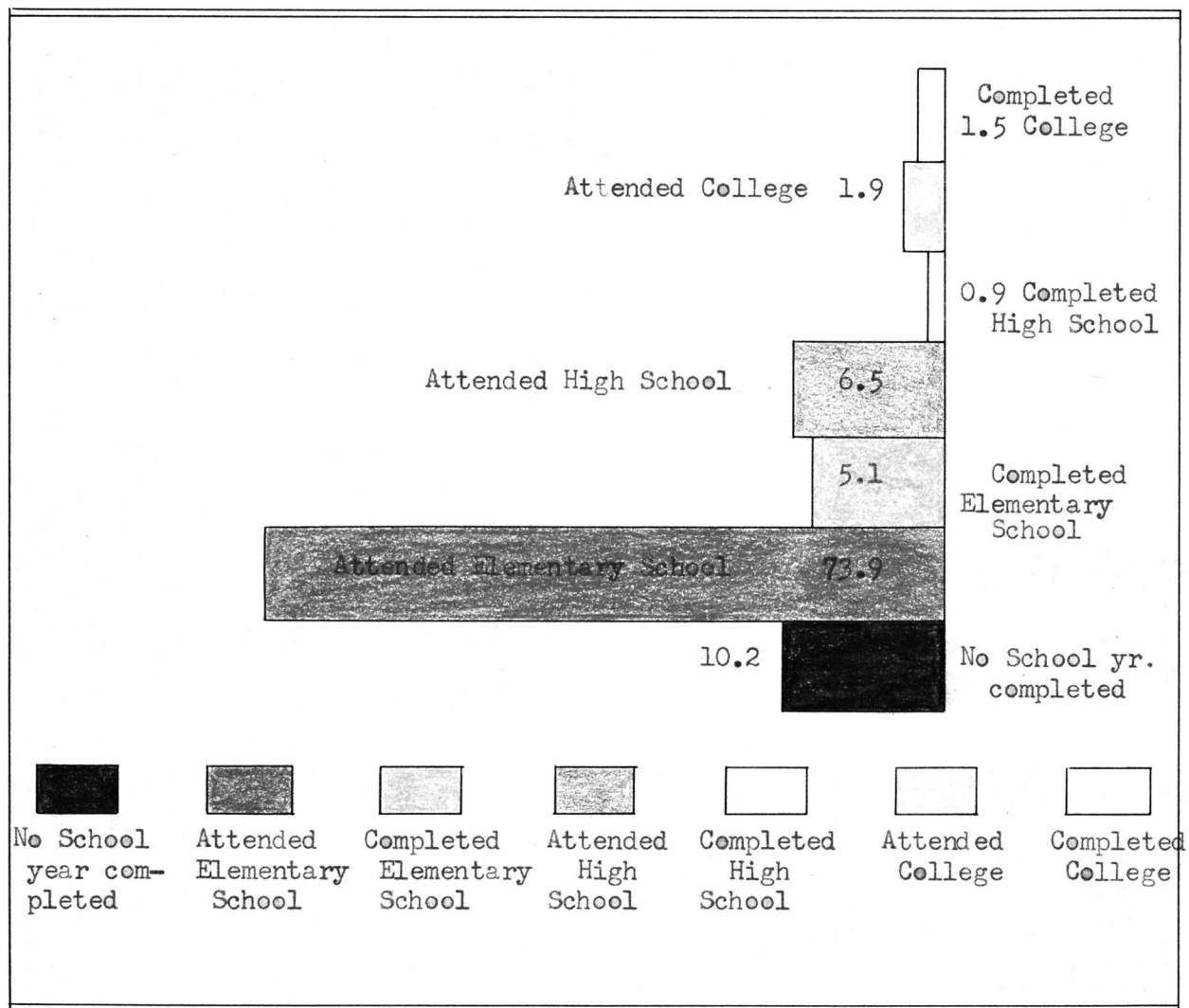
<sup>8</sup>Carl C. Taylor and Others, Rural Life in the United States Alfred A. Knopf, New York: 1949, p. 230.

<sup>9</sup>United States Census of Population, South Carolina, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1950, p-B40, p. 40-75.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. p.40-84.

Figure 4

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENTS OF 6440 NEGROES OF  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950\*



\*United States Census of Population, South Carolina, 1950, P-B40  
Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Table 49, p. 96.

Of the 120 persons, or 1.9 per cent, attending college, 100 persons, or 1.5 per cent of the total population completed college. This is far below the national average of 6 per cent. Thus, 84 per cent of the Negro population of the county has less than an elementary school education, or 95.7 per cent has less than a high school education.

The educational attainment of the rural Negro in the South is the lowest in the nation. This can be attributed to several underlying factors. Among the chief causes is farm tenancy, which has a high percentage rate among Negroes in the county (87.4). In many cases, the children of Negro tenants must enter school after the cotton picking season is over, and the children must drop out of school at the beginning of the farm season in March. This is done at the express wishes of the white landlord. The state school compulsory law is not enforced where rural Negroes are concerned in the county.

The mobility of the tenant, early marriage, and pregnancy of school age girls are contributing factors also.

Until 1946, and the consolidation of Negro County schools in Laurens County, there were no school buses in any district for Negro children. This meant that many children had to walk up to six miles per day to school. Many children were too tired to study and recite after reaching school and too tired to study in the evening after school from the long trek to and from school. The county paid \$6.33 per Negro child and \$36.31 per white child in 1940. The average value of the Negro school was \$1,543 and the white schools \$18,765. The illiteracy rate was 16.1 per cent, the Negro population with a 28.6 per cent illiteracy rate and the whites 7.4 per cent.<sup>11</sup>

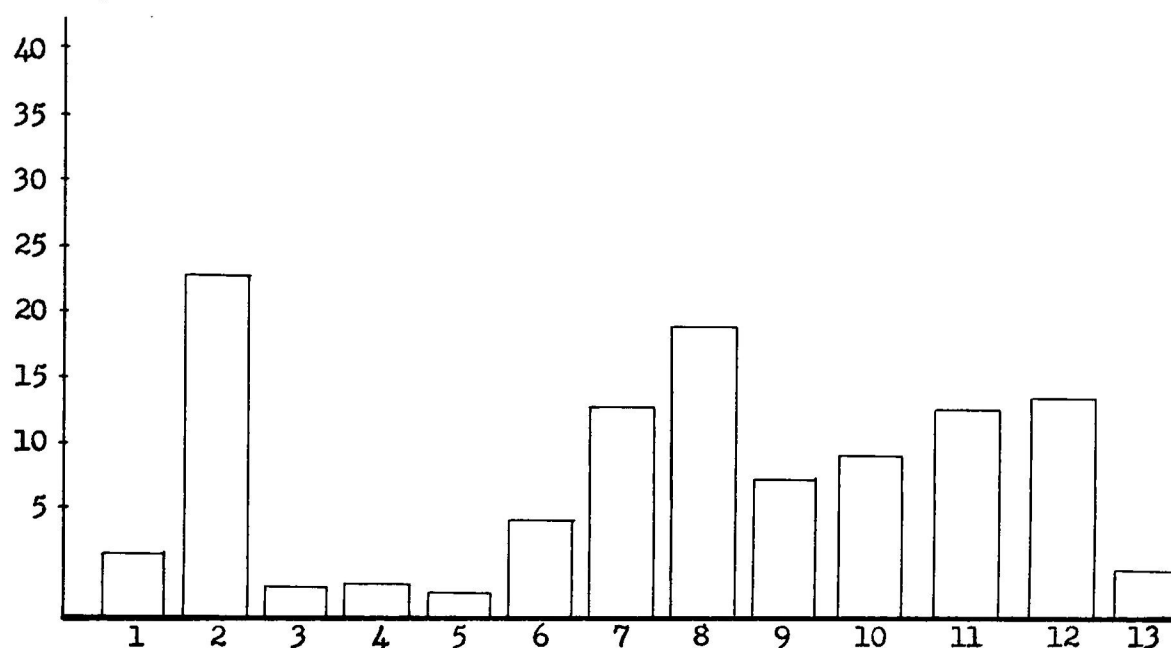
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<sup>11</sup>Charles S. Johnson, Statistical Atlas of Southern Counties The University of North Carolina Press, 1941, p. 202.



FIGURE 5: OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE OF NON-WHITE POPULATION OF  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950.\*

Percentage



- |                                |                                          |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 1. Professional                | 8. Private household workers             |
| 2. Farmers                     | 9. Service workers, except household     |
| 3. Managers and Proprietors    | 10. Farm laborers, unpaid family workers |
| 4. Clerical workers            | 11. Farm laborers, except unpaid         |
| 5. Sales workers               | 12. Laborers, except farm                |
| 6. Craftsmen and foremen       | 13. Occupation not listed                |
| 7. Operative & kindred workers |                                          |

\*United States Census of Population, South Carolina, 1950, P-B40.  
Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Table 44, p. 84.

However, one should not overlook the magnitude of the task confronting rural areas in the provision of educational services, since more than one-half (50.6 per cent) of the persons in the county are aged 6 - 15.

Laurens County's Negro population in 1950 was composed of 37.6 per cent children under 15, and 6.7 per cent over 65 years of age. These non-productive groups and the high farm tenancy rate put a heavy burden on the county in providing adequate educational facilities for Negro children.

Occupational Profile. Typical of the rural and small town Negro in any similar Southern locality, the highest percentage of Negro workers are found in the farm labor and domestic service group. And at the bottom of the percentage scale are the craftsmen, foremen and clerical workers.

The large majority of Negroes in Laurens County are engaged in some aspect of agriculture. Twenty-two per cent are farmers and the next in rank, 18.0 per cent, are engaged in domestic service. The groups having the next highest percentages are the city laborers, 12.0 per cent, and the farm laborers, 11.2 per cent, respectively.

At the bottom of the occupational profile are the craftsmen and foremen group, 0.4 per cent, the clerical and sales workers rank next to lowest, 0.6 per cent. Just above this group are the professional workers. The percentage for this group is 2.7 per cent. The professional group is composed wholly of public school teachers and preachers. There is only one Negro doctor in the county, and no Negro dentists or attorneys are there.

TABLE II: OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF 14604 NEGROES IN  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950. \*

OCCUPATION	TOTAL		MALE		FEMALE	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional, technical	144	2.7	27	2.2	117	0.5
Farmers	1104	22.0	1060	20.0	44	0.9
Managers & proprietors	33	0.6	24	0.5	9	0.1
Clerical workers	32	0.6	34	0.6	1	—
Sales workers	20	0.4	14	0.3	6	0.1
Craftsmen/foremen	243	4.6	234	4.0	9	0.6
Operatives & kindred w.	693	13.0	553	10.5	140	2.8
Private household w.	954	18.0	19	0.4	953	17.6
Service workers	319	6.0	133	2.7	186	3.8
Farm laborers (unpaid)	431	8.1	285	5.4	146	2.7
Farm laborers (paid)	591	11.2	509	9.6	82	1.6
Laborers (non-farm)	646	12.0	625	11.8	21	0.5
Occupations not reported	53	1.0	25	0.5	28	0.5
TOTAL	5284	100.0	1742	68.5	5284	30.5

\*United States Census of Population, South Carolina, 1950, P-B40.  
Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Table 44, p. 84.

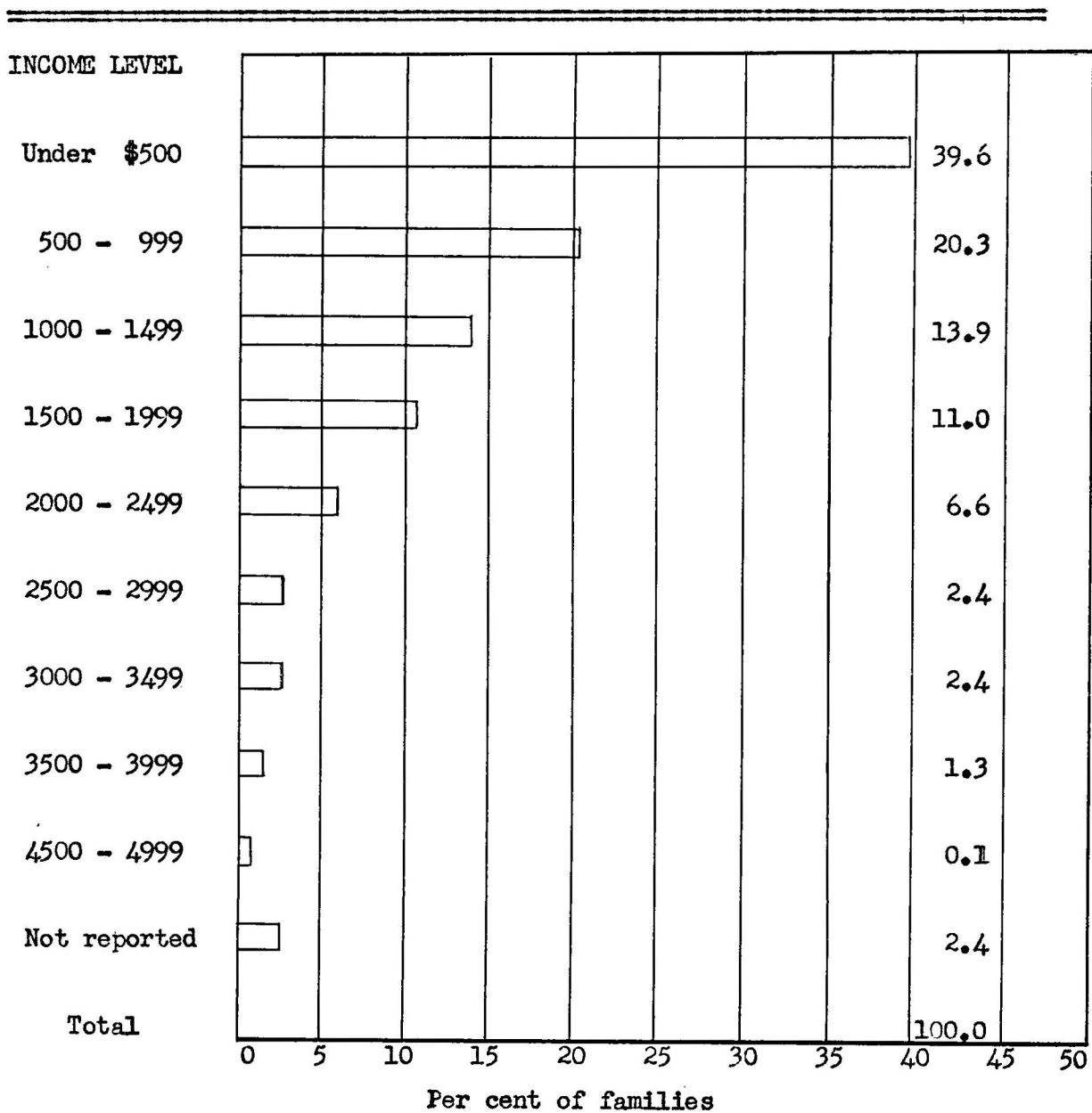
Therefore, if the farmers (22.0 per cent) and the farm laborers (11.2 per cent), and the unpaid farm family workers (8.1 per cent), were combined the total would be 51.3 per cent of the total Negro population which is engaged in farm work directly. Or take the private household workers (18.1 per cent) and the farm workers and the service workers (36.5 per cent), the sum total is 87.8 per cent. A majority of the citizens (58.8 per cent) of Laurens County are engaged in some aspect of agriculture. Thus, the county is agricultural in type, with a high percentage of its Negro population engaged in domestic work.

Besides the high farm tenancy rate, which is the cause of the low educational attainment of the Negroes in the county, the dual and discriminatory society is largely responsible for the high percentage of domestic and service workers, and the very low percentage of clerical, professional and managerial workers. Negro women and girls can find no gainful employment in the county besides laundry and domestic work in the homes of the white townspeople. Employment for Negro men is usually restricted to agricultural work. However, a nominal percentage of Negro men are employed by the Laurens Glass Works and the Laurens Feed and Milling Company. However, these men are engaged in the menial or unskilled labor type of work in these industries.

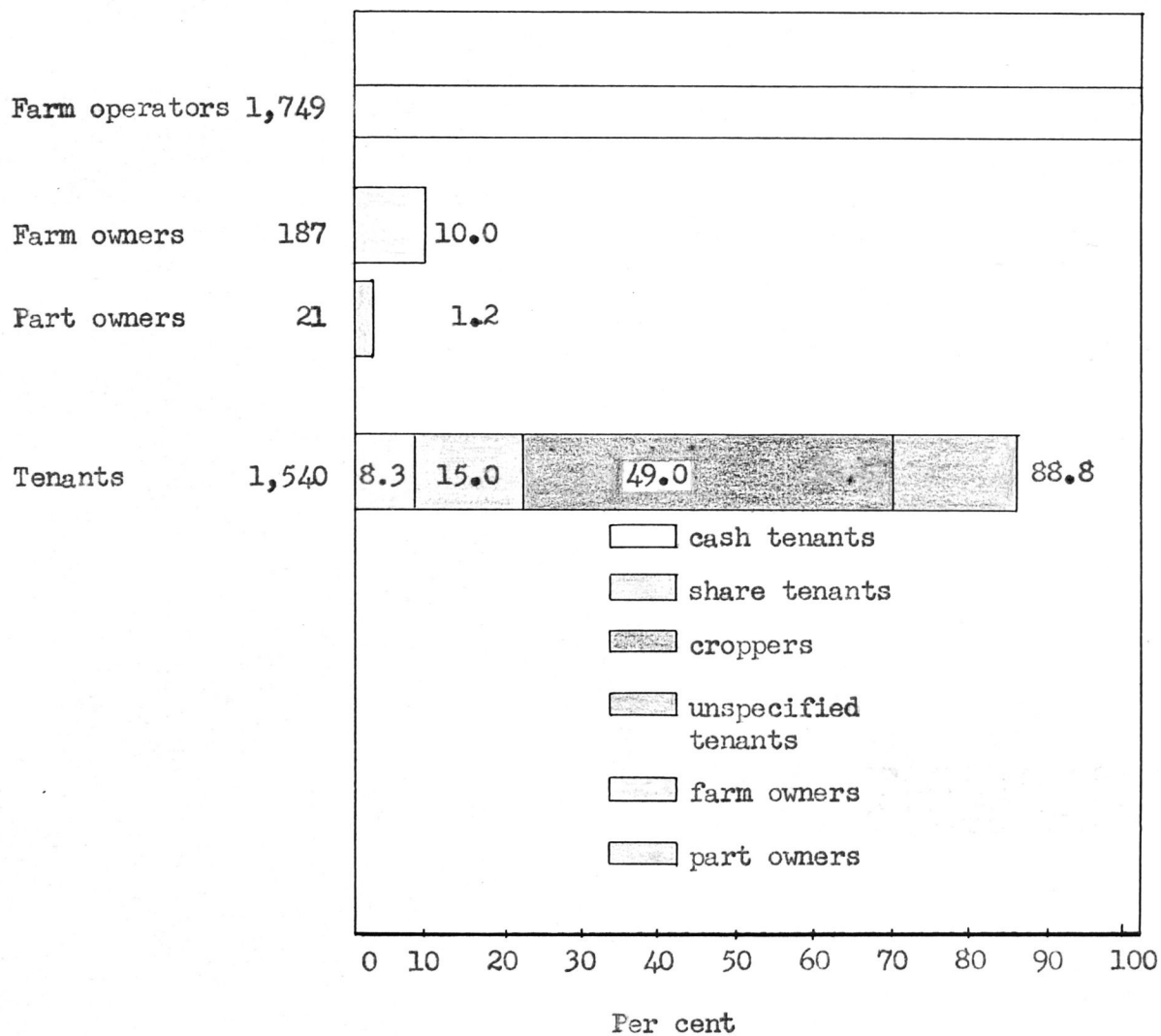
Income. Income varies greatly with the size and type of farm, and the size and kind of industries the community possesses.

Financial records show that farming brings the lowest average economic returns of any of the major occupations in the United States. The median income of the farmers of the nation is \$965. At the opposite extreme is the independent professional occupation with a median income

FIGURE 6: INCOME OF 3,540 NEGRO FAMILIES OF LAURENS COUNTY,  
SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950.



**FIGURE 7:** AGRICULTURAL LADDER OF NON-WHITE POPULATION OF  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1950



of \$3,840. More than 85 per cent of farm families fall below \$2,000 in annual income. Yet, farming is the "backbone" of our flourishing economy!

The median income for Laurens County's non-white population is \$726 per family, and \$2,214 per white family. The median for the state of South Carolina is \$2,391; the urban families, \$2,857, and the rural farm families \$1,492. The state's median annual income for the non-white population is \$790: the urban Negro family \$1,057, and \$580 for the rural Negro family.<sup>12</sup>

The income chart of Laurens County, Table II, shows that 39.6 per cent, or 1,405 families have an annual income of less than \$500 per family, and 20.4 per cent of the Negro families have an annual income of less than a thousand dollars per year. Approximately twenty-five per cent (24.9) of the Negro families fall in the \$1,000 - 1,999 income level. Therefore, almost eighty-five per cent (84.9) of the Negro families have incomes of less than two thousand dollars! No Negro family reported five thousand dollars per year and over.

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<sup>12</sup>United States Census of Population, South Carolina, 1950, P-B40. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, Table 45a, p. 87.

Typology of County. The county under study is like most of the counties located in the central Piedmont region of the Carolinas. Its clay-loam type of soil makes it conducive to large varieties of crops.

Laurens County comprises of 701 square miles, with 456,320 acres under cultivation, or 76.6 per cent of the county's total surface. 17,731 persons make their living in agriculture.

The tenancy rate for the county is 44.6 per cent; however, the tenancy rate among Negroes in the county is 88.8 per cent. This high rate of tenancy among so many of its citizens is evidence of the agricultural economy of the county.

Laurens County is agricultural in type, with the majority of its population engaged directly in agriculture. The highest percentage of Negro workers in the county are found in the farm labor and domestic service group. These two groups comprise 87.8 per cent of the Negro workers in the county. The percentage of persons engaged in some aspect of agriculture is 58.8 per cent.

Table I, p. 15, shows that 37.6 per cent of the Negro population are under 15 years of age and 12.7 per cent of the population are over fifty years of age. Therefore, about 50 per cent of the Negro population of the county are children or older people. An agricultural community is usually characterized by ~~elder~~ adults and children.



### CHAPTER III

#### OTHER CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEGRO IN LAURENS COUNTY

Social and Economic Background. The Negro farmer in South Carolina has had to work under unfavorable conditions. He was forced to begin his farming operations on land that was almost depleted of its fertility by unscientific farming methods of the slave regime. In addition to poor land, he has been more seriously handicapped by his inability to establish credit with the white people except on terms that would practically re-establish slavery in the form of peonage (a condition which is by no means eliminated even today).<sup>1</sup> "The credit system in South Carolina tends to keep the Negro farmer poor, ignorant, and non-progressive; especially if he is a tenant."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the Negro was not acquainted with scientific methods of farming. He has been disregarded in this respect until recently. Attempts are being made to introduce the Negro farmer to scientific methods, or more advanced ways of farming. Yet, others are unaware of ways by which their farms may yield better crops.

Fortunately, the Negro's plight in regard to landownership had been greatly mitigated by the United States Government. The Bankhead-Jones tenant legislation of 1937, and the Rural Rehabilitation Program of the Farm Security Administration (now the Farm Home Administration),

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<sup>1</sup>Carter G. Woodson, The Negro In Our History, pp. 435-436 Washington, D. C., 1931.

<sup>2</sup>A. H. Gordon, Negro Life and History in South Carolina. Industrial College, Georgia, 1929, pp. 159.

"... have made loans totaling about a quarter billion dollars to over 46,000 tenants to enable them to buy farms."<sup>3</sup>

However, the Negro tenant who becomes a prospective landowner, in many cases, must take the poorest land, in the most inaccessible part of the community, because he cannot buy land on the open market as his white peers do. "The Negro's opportunity to become a landowner is rather limited, for in most areas Negroes cannot buy farms on the open market, but must rely upon some influential white family to make the more personal arrangements in the purchase of land."<sup>4</sup>

And in spite of the help of the Farm Home Administration many tenants could not qualify for landownership. They owned no farm tools or livestock, or were too young or too old, or did not have children enough at home to qualify. Many of the Negroes of the county believed that the government would enslave them to it, and take their crops and livestock or any other tangible valuables they possessed, if the crops failed and they could not make the annual payments. Others just did not want to owe the government for thirty years! This fear and suspicion of the government were the results of a scheme of the landlords to keep tenants from becoming landowners.

Negro Farming in Laurens County. The total number of Negro farm operators in Laurens County is 1,749. Of this number, 1,540 or 88.8 per cent are tenants of some type. Farming, as far as the Negroes are concerned, does not consist of special efforts to raise vegetables for

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<sup>3</sup>Paul Landis, Rural Life in Process, New York: 1946, p. 438.

<sup>4</sup>Carl C. Taylor and Others, Rural Life in the United States, New York: 1949, p. 216.

marketing purposes, but is concentrated on the production of cotton. However, some Negro landowners plant more grain than any other crop, because of the lack of labor to work row crops.

Some farmers raise enough vegetables to sell to housewives of the urban communities. However, this is not done extensively. Generally, the rural Negro does not raise enough vegetables for his own family's consumption.

There are many Negroes who buy what they eat from stores in view of the fact that they do not produce sufficient food on their farms to supply the needs of their families.

The principal crops of the county are cotton and corn, the former being the money crop, and the latter the food. The quantity of cotton planted in any year is dependent upon the size of the acreage allotment prescribed by the Farm Security Administration through the local county agent. The amount of cotton produced is dependent, among other things, upon two conditions. First, the climatic conditions which affect its cultivation and development, and the extent to which it is affected by the boll weevils and other insects which prey upon the plant. Secondly, the ability and interest of the farmer to cultivate and use the latest scientific methods on his crops and give himself wholly to making the land yield its utmost.

Home of the Rural Negro. Partly as a result of inadequate pay for their part in the economic production, and the high percentage of farm tenancy in Laurens County, many rural Negroes have to live in sub-standard houses. Often there are eight to twelve members of the family living in five small rooms. The houses are heated from the open fire-

place and the walls are unsealed, and this adds to the discomforts. Though most of the rural houses have screened doors, the windows are not screened.

Many Negro women try to make their poorly furnished homes attractive by keeping them as clean as possible. They put pictures and wallpaper (sometimes made of newsprint) on the walls. Very often there are several cardboard posters on the walls with the inscription, "God is the Head of This Family," "In God We Trust," "Prayer Changes Things," etc.

There are some Negroes in the county who have moderately comfortable homes. Four Negro landowners have running water, inside toilet and bathroom. All of these farmers have telephones except one. Two other farmers have running water and space built for bathrooms, but have not been able to purchase bathroom furnishings and septic tanks. However, these farmers are exceptions to the rule.

Farm Tenancy in Laurens County. Tenancy is one of the chief problems of Negro farmers in the county. There are 2,419 farm operators in the county. Of this number 1,749 are Negro farm operators. This means that Negroes work on one half of the farms in the county. Negro landownership is about the same ratio as whites for the county. The total number of full landowners is 137 whites, and 187 Negroes. However, there is a much lower number of white tenants (754), when compared with Negro tenants (1,540), or 82.0 per cent.

The causes of farm tenancy are many. It is a sad fact that the tenant inherits to a large degree, conditions -- poverty, illiteracy and unsanitary conditions -- that hang as a millstone about his neck and prevent his rising to a high level. In addition to inheritance of

conditions, there are certain personal deficiencies that go into the make up of a tenant. These are the lack of desire for home ownership, and the lack of thrift and industry. There must also be confronted the economic condition of increasing difficulty for tenants to become owners on account of the high land prices, competition and speculation in these years of post-war prosperity.

The minor causes of tenancy are absentee landlordism, and the seeming inability to some Negroes to farm any other way.

Social and Economic Effects of Tenancy. There are certain inescapable effects, both social and economic, of farm tenancy that have been summed up by S. H. Hobbs, Jr., of the University of North Carolina.<sup>5</sup> In his estimation there are two major effects of farm tenancy: economic and social. Under the former effect are the wearing out of the soil, the compulsion of a one-crop system, small size of farms; a small annual yield of farm crops per farmer, because of small farms and lack of diversity in products; the inability to accumulate wealth with which to move out of tenancy into ownership.

As for social effect, tenancy strangles intellectual development by keeping children out of school to help with the crop and by moving them too often to allow any progress in school. Tenancy and illiteracy go hand in hand. Tenancy hinders moral development and breeds a class consciousness which is always destructive. It prevents the formation of rural organizations, and the promotion of cooperative marketing. It hinders effectiveness of political development since tenants as a rule

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<sup>5</sup>S. H. Hobbs, Jr., Article ...University of North Carolina Bulletin, Farm and Home Ownership, pp. 8, 14, 16. Vol. 2, No. 9.

do not vote in Laurens County. It prohibits home, community and church development, for in the tenant often the desire for these fundamentals is lacking.

Criticism of the system, however, is not all negative. Only the abuses which the system allows are proper subjects for denunciation. For, in spite of the lack of skill and means on the part of some Negroes to manage successfully a farm, many have been schooled by the system and helped to ownership in a short period of time. Kindly-inclined landlords and merchants have been great teachers who have done much to start the Negro farmer forward. As Dr. W. E. B. Dubois puts it:

\*Thrifty Negroes in the hands of well-disposed landlords and honest merchants early become independent landowners. A shiftless, ignorant Negro in the hands of unscrupulous landlords or Shylocks becomes something worse than a slave. The masses of Negroes between the two extremes fared as chance and weather let them.\*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Carter G. Woodson, The Rural Negro.  
Associated Negro Press, Washington, D. C., 1931, p. 86.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF SURVEY

As has been previously stated, this study of Laurens County aims to look into the status of the rural community in its relation to the rural church. The effects of Negro landownership upon church activities and standard of living will be described.

By means of the questionnaire method, concurrent with personal focused interviews with 100 Negro farmers of Laurens County, South Carolina, and their ministers, the writer collected as much data as possible on the farm families under investigation.

In measuring the standard of living, the Index of Status Characteristics was used and given arbitrary value. "The Index of Status Characteristics measures the socio-economic levels of the community .... and makes it possible for the analyst to say what is meant in socio-economic terms by such class concepts as Upper, Middle, or Lower Class..."<sup>1</sup> In short, it is primarily, an index of socio-economic factors.

The socio-economic or Index of Status Characteristics are rated as follows:

Upper Class	- 1	or Highest
Middle Class	- 2	Next Highest
Low Class	- 3	Low
Working Class	- 4	Lower
Low Low Class	- 5	Lowest

The Index of Status Characteristics will be based upon six status

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<sup>1</sup>W. Lloyd Warner, Marchia Meeker, and Kenneth Eells, Social Class in America, Science Research Associates, Inc., Chicago, 1949, p. 35.

characteristics: (1) Possessions, - which includes house furnishings, electric facilities, automobile, tractor or truck, and livestock. (2) House Type, - frame, brick or masonry, painted, whitewashed, number of rooms, shade trees, shrubbery, lawn and screened doors and windows. (3) Annual Gross Income, and (4) Length of Ownership. Each of these criteria, or status characteristics, is rated on a five-point scale which ranges from a rating of "1", very high status value, to "4", very low status value. "0" indicates ultra-low or missing. Simply, the highest numeral has the lowest value, and the lowest numeral has the highest value.

The ratings on the separate status characteristics are combined into a single numerical index by assigning to each one a weight and securing a weighted total of separate ratings. In this study, the landowners will not be rated individually, but collectively. The sum of each classification from "0" to "4" will be totaled and divided by the total number (50) of landowners. The same procedure will be used for the (50) non-landowners or tenants.

For example:

Class	I	II	III	IV	0	Total
House Type	4(x 1)	8(x 2)	25(x 3)	11(x 4)	2(x 5)	149 or -3

$$\text{Combined Weighted Total} - 5 = \frac{149}{50} = 2.9 \text{ or } -3$$



The range of values or classifications given by arbitrary value are:

Income	\$3500 and above	- 1
	2500 to 3500	- 2
	1500 to 2500	- 3
	1500 to 500	- 4
	Less than 500	- 0

Length of Ownership	0 to 10 years	- 4
	11 to 20 years	- 3
	21 to 30 years	- 2
	31 and above	- 1

House Type. 1. Brick or masonry or frame, painted and in perfect condition, ample rooms for occupants, with household facilities as hot and cold water, bathroom, telephone, lawn and shrubbery.

2. Frame house in good condition, with electricity and outside pit toilet, but no bathroom, telephone, or hot and cold water.

3. Frame house with old paint, electricity, outside toilet, screened doors, but not screened windows.

4. Frame house in need of repairs, unpainted, or very old paint, water from well or spring, no screens.

5. Typical plantation shanty, perhaps with electricity, poor outdoor surroundings and view from highway.

Possessions. 1. Moderately comfortable home, with ample rooms for occupants, automobile, telephone, T.V., orchard, daily newspaper, weekly periodicals and magazines.

2. Same as above, except no telephone, bathroom, hot and cold water.

3. Very few electric appliances, inadequate rooms, no daily newspaper, a minimum of weekly magazines.

4. Unpainted house, with electric service perhaps, but no appliances, no orchard, shrubbery or lawn.

TABLE III: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OR INDEX OF STATUS CHARACTERISTICS  
OF 50 NEGRO LANDOWNERS, AND 50 NON-LANDOWNERS  
OF LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

Status Characteristics	Class I	II	III	IV	0	Total
House Type	4	16	75	44	10	149
Possessions	4	16	84	32	10	147
Income	4	28	81	32	5	149
Length of Landownership	4	22	66	52	0	144
Landowners' Combined Weighted Total = $\frac{588}{50} = \frac{177}{4} = 2.9 \text{ or } -3$						

Non-Landowners

House Type	2	10	54	76	25	170
Possessions	3	12	54	64	35	168
Income	5	12	36	80	50	185
Combined Weighted Total = $\frac{523}{50} = \frac{104}{3} = 3.4 \text{ or } +3$						

It is interesting to note that non-landowners' house type rating is only .6 points below that of the landowners. This is not phenomenal, but rather typical in rural regions. As Dr. Arthur F. Raper noted in Rural Social Differentials, chapter 18 - "a small portion of Negro landowners live in houses no better constructed than those of most tenants. Here seems to be exemplified no more marked degree of pride of ownership than of the non-landowners."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Carl C. Taylor and Others, Rural Life in the United States, Alfred A. Knoph, New York, 1949, Chapter 18, p. 316.

However, there are many more homes of the tenants in the fourth and fifth status characteristic classifications than that of the landowners.

Therefore, though a few of the tenants live in decent houses (2.4 per cent), most of them (7.6 per cent), live in houses of very poor quality. .

It was observed that the tenants who live on the large plantation type farms usually live in the poorest type of homes. However, the large plantations, with many landless agricultural workers, seem to be on the decline in the county. Many of these plantation type farms have been changed from row crops to grain or cover crops. Several farms in the county that usually employed from six to twelve tenant families have now been converted into beef cattle farms or peach farms. Such farms have day laborers only, and are totally mechanized.

Some of the old plantations have deteriorated, and the houses are tumbled down shacks, and the tenants have either migrated to the cities or remained as renters to eke out what existence they may.

Two of the Negro landowners in this study have bought a part of such plantations. The houses on these two farms are badly in need of repair but could be made into lovely homes. The surroundings are shady and the cow pastures extend to the barn yard. The land seems to be good and timber is plentiful. Each of these landowners, however, seem to have no thought about cutting his timber to repair his home.

Several of the homes of landowners were several miles from the main highway leading into town, and quite frequently a mile or two from any hard-surface road. This caused the homes to get a low arbitrary value because of their inaccessibility. One of the chief reasons for the inaccessible location is the limitation of the Negro's opportunity

to buy farms in the open market. The Negro has been at a disadvantage when competing with white buyers in the South. He has not enjoyed much of that legal security which is a necessary condition for successful entrepreneurship; at any rate, he has had far less of it than the whites with whom he has had to compete. It seems there has always been an active solidarity among white people to prevent Negroes from acquiring land in white neighborhoods. "Negroes," as T. J. Woofter, Jr. observed, "have always been restricted in their opportunity to purchase land to the more undesirable sections. Just as white neighborhoods are recognized in the cities so there are rural areas where Negro owners are not welcome and white owners are reluctant to sell to Negroes. Thus, Negro proprietorships have been acquired in outlying sections, on back roads, and on the poorer land."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, many times the tenant's house is slightly behind, or a few yards down the highway from the white landlord's house, which is usually right on the highway. This gives the tenant, in many cases, an advantage over the Negro landowner who is seldom so fortunate as to live so near the highway.

Possessions. In regard to possessions, there are more landowners in the first, second and third class (80 per cent) than non-landowners (54 per cent). This means that the landowners' arbitrary value rating is 3.7 and the tenants 4.2. The total difference is only five points or one-half point value above the tenants. Many of the tenants' children do not finish high school or attend college, as many of the landowners' children

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<sup>3</sup>T. J. Woofter, Jr., Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation Works Progress Administration, Monograph V., 1936, p. 24.

do. The boys usually buy a car and the girls buy household appliances, furniture and television sets.

The supplement to the tenants' families' income keeps them in almost the same rating as the landowner in regard to possessions. In many cases, the tenants possessed newer cars and furniture than landowners.

However, the Negro landowners have more farm equipment and home appliances than the non-landowners. Eleven Negro landowners (of the fifty under study in Laurens County) have running water, but only three of the fifty Negro non-landowners have electric pumps. Seven landowners have inside toilets; only one tenant has this convenience. Five Negro landowners have telephones, but no tenant in this study had a telephone. As for electricity, refrigerators, radios and television sets, the tenants' rate is almost as high as the landowners. (See Table IV, page 42, Items Indicating Standard of Living of 100 Negro Farmers in Laurens County, South Carolina.)

Income. The annual gross income of the Negro landowner and non-landowner constitutes the greatest variation of all the classifications of the arbitrary value scale (3.7 and 2.9). More tenants have the highest annual gross income (5 per cent). This difference is not the result of the larger farms of the Negro landowners. More of the landowners have smaller farms than those of the tenants. This difference in annual gross income is due to the fact that many of the tenants are croppers (49.0 per cent) furnishing only labor, and dependent almost entirely upon cotton as a source of income.

The writer observed, but was not able to ascertain to what extent

the tenants' incomes are supplemented by work in urban industries. Among the renters, especially, members of many of these families, are employed for wages in cotton mills, glass works and a few work at the U. S. Nuclear Bomb Project in Aiken and Barnwell Counties. Certainly their farm incomes are supplemented greatly by such employment.

Among tenants as well as landowners, the standard of living could be higher than it is, in spite of the rather poor economic conditions among rural Negroes in the county. Only three persons in the study were without electricity furnished by the Rural Electrification Authority. Two of these families were landowners, who perhaps do not care for the convenience of electricity. With the cheap electric power, many families could have running water and indoor bathrooms. Instead of the new cars and in some cases two cars (the father and the son own a car each) in some families, an electric stove could be purchased or an electric pump installed for about two hundred dollars. Here low income is not the blame for the lower standard of living, but more education and a new sense of values are needed.

TABLE IV: ITEMS INDICATING STANDARD OF LIVING OF 100 NEGRO FARMERS  
IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA \*

	<u>Landowners</u>	<u>Tenants</u>
Flowers	47	41
Lawn Cut	33	17
Shade Trees	48	41
Garden	48	43
Orchard	27	18
Painted House	44	13
Whitewashed	2	9
Glass Windows	50	48
Screened Doors	49	43
Radio	48	49
Electric Lights	48	49
Refrigerator	39	33
Electric Stove	8	2
Wood stove	42	48
Outdoor Toilet	42	47
Well or Spring	39	47
Indoor Toilet	8	1
Running Water	11	3
Bathroom	7	0
Telephone	5	1
Automobile	47	44
T.V.	21	17
Tractor	13	2
Fireplace for heat	32	41
Heater	18	11
Daily paper	46	33
Weekly paper	44	46
Farm paper	44	18
Housekeeping magazines	14	18
Religious periodicals	16	9

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\* The table shows only whether these farmers have or have not these items and does not show degrees of quality.

## CHAPTER V

### CHURCH ACTIVITIES IN THE RURAL CHURCHES OF LAURENS COUNTY

Public worship is a social function itself. But besides this type of social function, there is very little of any type of social activities to be found in the rural Negro churches in Laurens County.

Cultural Programs. Cultural programs, per se, are non-existent in the rural churches of the county. Most of the cultural activities that are usually conducted by churches are unknown to the average rural church-goer. Such cultural activities as lectures, forums, Sunday School Lesson Classes, or Bible Study Groups, religious and denominational films and slides, and recreational activities are foreign indeed to the rural church member. Any form of recreation for youth or just the word "movies" is deemed sinful.

Certainly, the rural youth must have many problems in regards to his recreational and cultural development. Definitely, he finds no solution to moral, economic and marital problems because none of these are discussed in his church. Any discussion of marital problems, or any other issue pertaining to sex is considered taboo.

However, occasionally, there are programs in the rural churches that are somewhat educationally and culturally flavored. Favorite among such programs are: The Twelve Tribes of Israel, The Forty-Eight States, and the Books of the Bible Pageant. These programs are not sponsored with any educational or cultural intent, but they may subtly possess both of these values. They are explained briefly:

The Twelve Tribes of Israel is a pageant depicting to some degree



the acts of the Twelve Tribes of Israel under the reign of King David and Solomon.

The Forty-Eight States is a play consisting of at least forty-eight characters or families representing the Forty-Eight States of the United States. Each character chooses a state and tries to report more money than any other person representing another state. Usually the competition is very keen and prizes are given to those reporting the highest sum of money.

The Books of the Bible Pageant consists of at least sixty-six active participants, dressed in robes and sheets to resemble Biblical characters. Each participant proceeds up the aisle of the church toward the pulpit platform, singing a hymn or spiritual with the help of the choir in the background. When the participant reaches the platform the singing ceases and he recites a verse or two from the book of the Bible he is representing. He then places the sum of money he has collected on the offering table.

Singing Conventions. There is another organization which is quite popular among the rural Baptist churches of the county. This organization is composed of members of most of the rural Baptist churches and is called the "Forty-Eight States Singing Convention." Previously, it was called the "World Series Singing Convention." These groups usually meet every Fifth Sunday (quarterly) for a "Song-Fest." Each church is represented by its choir. And each choir sings at least three selections usually of the old fashioned "note-type" singing. Tables are set up for each church represented for collections. Each member contributes to the table representing his church, or to the church choir he thinks sings best.

Usually, the total amount of money received is left with the church where the meeting is held.

All of these programs just mentioned are usually sponsored by the Women's organizations for the sole purpose of getting funds for some project. And always the women are more active in such undertakings than the men, whether they are landowners or not.

All of the churches in this study have a Woman's organization. This organization is commonly referred to as "The Women's Missionary Society" or simply "The Missionary Union." The Woman's Society provides for the sick of the community and for what amount of money that is sent to the conference or convention for missions. The men's organizations may render similar service, but to their own members only.

Fraternal Organizations. Another organization of the communities under study (which is connected with the church indirectly) is the fraternal lodges. The men have two such organizations. The Masonic (F. and A. M.) and the Knights of Pythians. Some years ago the Odd Fellows were popular in the county also, but it is now defunct.

The women have the Eastern Star Lodge which usually has a big annual gathering each year. The men's and women's organizations are always on hand at the demise of one of their members, performing ostentatiously and prolonging the funeral.

There are about twice as many members in the women's organizations as there are in the men's organizations. This is also the case in attending or teaching Sunday School Classes. In every case it seems that women are more diligent church workers than men.

Ministerial Organizations. The writer found that the ministers have organizations known as the ministerial alliance or association; however, the pastors do not meet together at the same alliance. The pastors of this study live in five different counties, Greenwood, Greenville, Newberry, Spartanburg and Laurens Counties.

These ministerial organizations meet once per week and discuss a few problems, and sometime social evils among Negroes are discussed. However, since some of the ministers are serving in counties that they do not live in, concerted efforts cannot be effected on problems peculiar to a specific county.

The ministers also have interest in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in their respective county alliances. But no chapters are established in the rural communities in which they serve. In fact, the ministers seldom mention anything about the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to their members in the rural churches.

In all of these organizations, some minister among the group is designated to preach at each meeting. Each minister seems to try to have more "rousements" in his sermon than the preceding one. There are always back-slapping and a story about how much money was raised on last Sunday.

Rallies. All rural churches have rallies as a means of securing funds for some repair or building projects. Usually two such rallies are given annually. The first rally usually comes in August or the early part of September. This one is commonly referred to as "Homecoming Day Rally," and it signals the beginning of the annual revival. Usually the members' names are called by the clerk and the member responds by calling the

the amount he is going to contribute. Or captains are selected to collect the money from a given number of members and each one reads it aloud in church when his number is called. This procedure always requires about an hour and there is applause after the captains' reports are combined and the total reported.

Revivals. Revival or "big meeting" is one of the biggest events of the year in the rural churches of Laurens County. They are held during the "lay-by" time in the late summer months. Members, and previous members who have migrated to northern cities usually are at home on vacation to see parents and relatives, attend revival. Neighboring rural churches are invited to attend. It is a gala time of big dinners and watermelon cutting.

The evangelist (or preacher) is usually renowned for his ability to preach and always preaches until he gets some of the congregation to shout. After the shouting ceases somewhat, he usually tells some story of sudden death or some other catastrophe that once happened to some young person who was a "sinner" or did not belong to some church. He is sure then of getting some child or teenager to join the church through fear.

The criterion of a good evangelist is to get as many people to join the church as he possibly can. And it seems that "the end justifies any means."

There are a few programs found in some of the rural churches of the county that seek to entertain and develop their own congregation. There are Christmas and Easter plays, and Children's Day programs, that are usually sponsored by the local talent of the Sunday School.

Advertisement of Church Activities. There is one form of adver-

tisement used in the rural churches of the county. The radio is used to announce church programs through the courtesy of one of the local funeral homes in Laurens. Each Sunday morning for a period of fifteen minutes, the quartet singing is featured by the funeral home, programs of local church activities are announced between selections. None of the churches use the local weekly paper for church announcements. Neither do any of them have outside bulletin boards. Only three of the rural churches of this study have any kind of sign near the church giving the name of the church. All of the white rural churches have road signs giving the name of the church.

Chief among the causes for the very limited church activities in the rural church are its ministers. All of the ministers of the churches under investigation in this study are non-resident ministers. That is, they do not reside in the communities in which they serve. The majority (56.5 per cent) live more than twenty miles away from the churches they serve. Only six per cent of the ministers live within five miles of their churches. The average, or median distance from church is 21.4 miles for the sixteen ministers under study in Laurens County. (See Table V , Distance From Church of Sixteen Rural Pastors).

All of the ministers of this study are "pastors" of two or more churches, and preach once a month at each church, with the exception of two ministers. These two churches (one African Methodist Episcopal and one Baptist) have regular preaching services twice a month. Therefore, the ministers are at least present at their churches twice per month. The other ministers are present at each of their churches once a month, unless there is a funeral or church business meeting. Usually,

TABLE V            DISTANCES FROM CHURCH OF SIXTEEN RURAL PASTORS IN  
LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1955.

Number of Miles	Pastors	
	Number	Per Cent
0 - 4 miles	1	6.0
5 - 9	2	12.5
10 - 14	3	19.0
15 - 19	1	6.0
20 - 24	1	6.0
25 - 29	2	12.5
30 and over	6	38.0
Total	16	100.0

this type of arrangement eliminates weekly preparation of sermons, for some of the ministers use the same sermon every Sunday for a month at a different church. This absenteeism, or "suit-case" type of itinerant minister can at best give only limited service to the church which he serves as pastor.

TABLE VI shows that only three of the sixteen ministers completed college (one seminary training), and two of those who completed college are public school teachers, and only three out of the sixteen ministers are not engaged in other full time occupations.

The long distances from churches that ministers serve, the limited formal training, and the other occupational pursuits of the ministers, leave little time for a strong active social activities program in their churches.

It does seem that the ministers would help supervise some of the few activities of the rural churches they serve. Even the Sunday School and prayer services just preceding the sermon are conducted entirely by laymen. Very seldom does the minister attend Sunday School and when he does, he makes his advent at the very end of the period. Usually the minister arrives late, about the time he thinks prayer services are well underway. If he arrives at church before Sunday School is over, he usually sits in his car or stands outside waiting for Sunday School to adjourn. Usually after the preaching service is over, the minister helps the officers count the money and is on his way to another one of his churches or to the home of one of the members for dinner.

The pastors were not asked about how many pastoral visits they made during a month or year. The members were asked the questions, however. All members asked this question seemed to be in accord that their minister never visits them unless someone is very sick, or he is invited to their home for dinner. The church members seem not to care about their pastor visiting them. They are not accustomed to it and, therefore, do not expect it.

However, one must be aware of the stipends these ministers receive as pastors from their churches. According to the "Association Minutes,"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes of the Tumbling Shoals Baptist Association.  
September 24, 25, 1954, pp. 14-16.

TABLE VI: THE FORMAL TRAINING AND SECULAR OCCUPATION OF PASTORS, THE NUMBER OF CHURCHES EACH PASTOR SERVES, AND STATEMENT OF RESIDENT OR NON-RESIDENT PASTORS OF SIXTEEN RURAL NEGRO CHURCHES IN LAURENS COUNTY

Name of Church	Resident	Non-Resident	Number of Churches	Amount of Formal Training	Secular Occupation, of Trade
Bethel (A.M.E.)		x	3	2 years college	Barber
Bethel Hall Baptist		x	2	College	P.S. Teacher (retired)
Center Rabum		x	3	Attended college	(None)
Cedar Grove		x	2	7th Grade	City laborer
Flat Ruff		x	2	College	High School Principal
Good Hope		x	3	Attended college	(None)
Hopewell		x	2	High School	Light farming
Laurel Hill		x	3	Attended college	(None)
Mt. Zion		x	2	College	P. S. Teacher
Mill Rock		x	2	6th Grade	Light farming
New Grove		x	4	7th Grade	Plasterer
Pleasant View		x	2	10th Grade	
Rocky Spring		x	3	2 years college	
St. John		x	2	College B. Th.	(None)
Mt. Carmel (A.M.E.)		x	2	High School ?	
White Plain		x	3	8th Grade	Light farming
Total		16	42		

\* Minutes of the Eightieth Annual Session, Tumbling Shoals Baptist Association



TABLE VII: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, PREACHING SERVICES PER MONTH, VALUE OF  
CHURCH PROPERTY, AND PASTOR'S SALARY OF TWENTY-EIGHT NEGRO  
RURAL CHURCHES IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1955.\*

Name of Church	Church Membership	Preaching Per Month	Pastor's Salary	Value of Church
Bethel (A.M.E.)	57	1	\$300	\$3,000
Bethel	82	1	300	2,500
Bethlehem	150	1	540	5,000
Bethel Hall	56	1	--	3,000
Bethel Grove	47	1	300	3,000
Center Rabun	117	1	350	4,500
Cedar Grove	38	1	240	3,000
Christian Hope	27	1	--	2,500
Ducan Creek	200	1	300	4,000
Flat Ruff	85	1	420	3,000
Good Hope	65	1	300	3,000
Hopewell	65	1	420	3,000
Laurel Hill	196	1	410	4,500
Little River Zion	116	2	600	10,000
Mt. Carmel	102	2	520	5,000
Mt. Zion No. 1	120	1	420	8,000
Mt. Zion No. 2	117	2	600	6,000
Mill Rock	50	1	300	4,000
New Forkville	150	1	480	4,500
New China	57	1	400	4,000
New Grove	100	1	600	7,000
New Prospect	50	1	300	2,500
Pleasant View	170	1	300	5,000
Rocky Spring	41	1	420	5,000
St. John	45	1	250	5,000
White Plain	300	1	600	5,000
Wateree	43	1	300	2,000
Zion Hill	46	1	300	3,000

\*Minutes of the Eightieth Annual Session, Tumbling Shoals Baptist Association.

Conference Minutes of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, 1954.

the salaries of these ministers range from \$240 - \$600 per year. (The median salary is \$300 per year. The median membership is 98 members.) See TABLE VII, p. 52.

Because of the low stipends the rural pastors receive, a secular occupation is necessary, and in many cases, imperative. The rather long distance (21.4 miles average or median) most of the pastors live from their churches, makes the ownership of a car a very important item in the work of these rural pastors. Obviously, a high percentage of these ministers' income is spent for traveling expenses. The economic factor of salary also accounts for the necessity of each pastor serving two or more churches, and many of them (70 per cent) are employed in a full time secular occupation.

Despite the rather poor salaries the rural ministers receive, they are far out of proportion to the services the ministers are able to render. Usually, the major portion of the church offerings goes to the minister, the small remainder goes for light and fuel bills.

However, the writer is cognizant of the very inadequate physical plant and equipment of the rural Negro churches of Laurens County. They do not allow for more than the very minimum of church activities. The lack of full-time leadership in planning wholesome church activities may warrant the absence of many church activities. These two factors may also serve as a definite index to the extent of a church's social program.

Then, too, there is another side to the very limited activities of the rural Negro Church: that is, its members. Many of the adult members hold the view that the church is for worship services only. Any other activity in the church is considered sinful. It seems that the rural

TABLE VIII: PASTORAL EXPERIENCE OF MINISTERS IN SIXTEEN RURAL CHURCHES  
IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1956.

In Pastorate	Number of Pastors
Under 5 years	0
5 - 9 years	0
10 - 15 years	2
15 - 19 years	3
20 - 24 years	5
25 - 29 years	2
30 years and above	4
Total	16

TABLE IX: LENGTH OF SERVICE IN PRESENT CHURCH

Length of Service	Number
Under 4 years	0
5 - 9 years	2
10 - 14 years	4
15 - 19 years	4
20 - 24 years	3
25 years and over	3
Total	16

Negro church has persisted in building its activities around factors which are almost entirely religious in nature. "Negroes," as Carter G. Woodson has observed, "are not anxious to have their church take over too many things which the community requires."<sup>2</sup> With such notions about the program of the church, and the ever-growing migration trend of the young adults from rural to urban areas, the rural Negro minister cannot be held to blame entirely for the type of service he is able to render.

The respect and rapport of these ministers of the rural churches could be excellent. A majority of them have been in the ministry for twenty years or more (68.7 per cent). They have enjoyed a remarkable tenure of 16.7 years (median) in the churches they are presently serving. Therefore, they are quite stable in their respective communities. And their influence and the magnitude of service could be quite extensive.

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<sup>2</sup>Carter G. Woodson, The Negro in Our History, Associated Negro Press, Washington, D.C., 1931, p. 592.

## CHAPTER VI

### FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, CRITICISMS AND SUGGESTIONS

Findings. The investigator found that social activities\* in the rural churches in Laurens County are almost nil. There are no Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts organizations, or any other kind of social function held within the rural churches. In those communities where there are 4-H Clubs, and Home Demonstration Clubs, these clubs always meet at the public high school. The lodge meetings are usually held in the Lodge Hall. In fact, as far as the writer could ascertain from conversation there has never been a church wedding in any of the rural Negro Churches in the county. Frankly, it seems that the church building is a place for singing, shouting, praying, preaching and for holding funerals only.

Preaching seems to be the predominant feature in the rural church. Brunner expressed a similar idea when he said "preaching is the overshadowing feature of the country church program."<sup>1</sup>

However, one must keep in mind the great limitations of leadership and space and other facilities necessary for meetings, organizations and other activities in the rural church.

However, there are some activities in the rural Negro churches of the county. These activities are an integral part of the Sunday worship program itself.

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\*By the term "social activities," the writer means those activities which are engaged in by the church, but do not fall within its prescribed range of standard ceremonies and organization in relation to creed, rites, and ecclesiastical authority.

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<sup>1</sup>E. DeS Brunner, The Rural South  
Harper and Brothers, New York, 1923, p. 22.

Practically 90 per cent of the churches studied have organized their young people into groups known as the junior choir. These groups are assigned particular songs to sing (mostly gospel songs or spirituals). Usually, some of the members of this group sing with the senior choir also. In most cases, these young people's groups are under very poor musical leadership and sometimes sing without the accompaniment of music.

Rallies. One phase of the social life of the rural Negro church in Laurens County in which all groups regardless of age or sex generally participate is rallies. At least two annual rallies are given each year. The first usually comes in late July or the month of August. This is known as Homecoming Day Rally, which is the beginning of "big meeting" or revival. The second rally usually comes in the month of October and is commonly referred to as "Harvest Festival" or "Thankful Rally." On both of these rally days, each member is assessed a sum to pay to his church. Three sermons are preached and dinner is served on the church ground under the trees or in the lodge halls.

Revivals are annual activities, held usually in the month of July and August. There is always some "guest minister" invited to serve as revivalist from some other church in the state and frequently from another state. Revivals are held for five successive nights, and some churches have noonday services also.

Various churches and their congregations are invited from neighboring churches to sing each night of the revival, and usually some officers from the visiting church are asked to assist in handling the collection.

Church Attendance. It was observed that church attendance among rural people is determined by two factors: namely, the distance of the

TABLE X: DISTANCE TO CHURCH AND TIMES ATTENDED IN MONTH OF 100 NEGRO  
FAMILIES IN LAURENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, 1955

Distance to Church	Number of Times attended in Month					Number of Families
	1	2	3	4	0	
0 - 2 miles	6	11	9	36	1	
3 - 5 miles	4	6	4	13	4	
6 - 8 miles	4	1	-	1	-	
8 miles and over	-	-	-	-	-	
	14	18	13	50	6	

family from church, and who or how many members of a family can drive the family car. Generally, those families living near the church attend activities of the church more frequently than those living several miles from church. On the other hand, those living farthest away attend more frequently than those living nearer, if several members of that family can drive the family car.

The writer also found that the more activities the rural churches have, the more frequently members attend. Few members are absent from preaching services at their churches. Many of the adult members attend some other church on the Sundays their churches are not having preaching services. This accounts for the poor attendance of the same adults in their own Sunday School each Sunday.

Some rural Negroes are regular attendants at religious services

whenever there are preaching services or quartet singing. Then they will travel many miles to attend. The very meager activity of their respective churches is the greatest single cause for poor attendance.

Stability of Landowners and Tenants. The non-landowners of this study were asked several questions concerning their tenure: - how long is the lease? Is it written or oral? Did he expect to own? And would he like for his children to be farmers? A majority of the tenants were uncertain about what the word "lease" means. After the term was explained, all except one had one year oral leases. Fifty-four per cent of the tenants preferred their sons to become something else besides farmers. Others were undecided or indifferent as to what they wanted their sons to become. One expressed it this way, "young folks don't want to work nowadays, especially, if they have been to school. The farm is no place for anybody who don't want work." Another tenant said, "farming is all right if you own your land and tools. I tell my boys to stop running around in the car at night and try to save so they can buy some land and tools, but it don't do any good ..." Several of the tenants glorified farming and talked of how much cotton they used to make and of the character of their landlords. One tenant (a renter) said he could sell all the wood he could cut and plant all the foodstuffs he wished to plant. Whether he actually did this, he never did say.

Since no record was taken of how long the tenant had lived on the land on which he was living, the mobility of the tenants cannot be ascertained. However, only one had a written lease, and all others had one year oral leases.

Working under this type of system, the tenant is always at the



mercy of the landlord. Without a written lease the tenant must depend upon the integrity and sense of justice of the landlord. Many times the landlord is just a little better off economically than his tenant in that he is able to get credit from the local business men and bank. With so many (all except one) tenant families with one year oral leases, it can be concluded that they move quite frequently. Certainly, the tenants do not have the stability of the landowners, and definitely most of them do not hold the social or economic status in the community as the landowners.

The landowners hold a coveted social status in the community and are rather proud of it. This is partly substantiated in the fact that though most landowners express little preference as to what their sons become, feeling that the son should decide for himself, of those who do express a preference, the majority name farming as first choice. Most of the landowners (62.2 per cent) think that farming is one of the best ways to make a living. As one farmer of the survey put it, "farming is the truly honest way of making a living. Of course, it requires plenty of hard work - you cannot cheat the soil .... you can get out of it only what you put into it." Another landowner expressed it this way, "Here I am my own boss, no white man tells me what to do. I tell my sons that, but he had rather work for them (at the cotton oil mill) than here on the farm. But he will soon get tired of it and work here at home."

Several other landowners of the county recalled the good old days when all their children were at home and the large number of bales of cotton they used to make. They talked about the advent of the boll weevil and the Franklin D. Roosevelt Administration, reminiscently and with mixed emotions.

It can be seen from the chart, Table IV, that the Negro landowners have quite a marked degree of stability in Laurens County. The length of Negro land ownership in this study is an average or mean 18.7 years. This means continued life and growth for the church and community in the landowner. As Arthur Raper puts it, "The Negro landowners as a group constitute the most independent and stable element of the rural Negro population, and as such they provide much more than their proportionate share of leadership for the churches and other organized activities of the racial group."<sup>2</sup>

There is always more stability in the "homesteader" than in the tenant or laborer, who is the tool of the landlord to mine all he can out of the soil as long as he can.

The pride of ownership of any valuable commodity incites care, love and protection of that commodity on the part of its owners. The toil and feeling of achievement in owning a piece of the good earth warrants the care and nurture of the soil that it may produce all that it is capable of producing for the owner who loves it, and gives of himself to it.

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<sup>2</sup>Carl C. Taylor and Others, Rural Life In The United States, Chapter 18, Rural Social Differentials, Arthur Raper, p. 316. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1949.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study was concerned with three phases of rural life in Laurens, County, South Carolina, among Negroes: Farm ownership, the standard of living, and the total church life of the people of the community.

A total of 100 farm families of Laurens County were visited. Fifty families were landowners, and fifty families were tenants. The main purpose was to see the difference between landowners and tenants in regards to standard of living and their contribution to the religious life of the community. The writer felt that there was a direct and definite relationship between landownership, the standard of living and participation in church activities. In spite of this preconceived idea, the main conclusion is negative.

The investigator found that there is no marked degree of difference in the church attendance and participation in church activities of Negro landowners over non-landowners. However, a more close study might reveal a slight varying degree in the attendance of the landowners over the non-landowners. However, the degree would be slight.

In regards to financial contributions, it could not be ascertained as to which group contributes more to his church. Because of the poor financial records, and no monthly, quarterly or yearly financial reports of individual contributions are given, it is impossible for the investigator to assert the varying degrees of contributions of the two groups to their respective churches.

However, it can be said that all persons of all the churches under

this study are assessed an equal amount to contribute to their churches monthly. Even in rallies no one is requested to make a pledge for the amount he will contribute to his church. Instead, each member of the church is assessed a given amount to contribute, according to sex and age with no regards as to whether he is a landowner or not.

The slightly higher index of status characteristic of the landowners (-3) over the non-landowners ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) cannot serve as indexes to the contribution or participation in church activities of either group. These deeds and services are individual matters and are governed by the will and conscience of the individual.

Recommendations. There are thirty-one Baptist Churches in Laurens County and twenty-six of them are in rural areas.<sup>1</sup> Only two denominations are represented in the county (Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal). Of the latter there are only three in the rural communities. This makes a total of twenty-nine rural churches in the county.

The county has a needless multiplication of country churches from the standpoint of members and farm income. All of the churches were built before the advent of good roads and motor cars. When the population was mainly rural, the bad roads and the transportation slow, there was an obvious need for many church houses, conveniently located to furnish all citizens opportunities to religious worship. The people could go only very short distances to church, hence church houses were needed in every community. Now, since the roads are excellent and numerous, and since the antiquated modes of travel have been supplanted by more rapid motor con-

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<sup>1</sup>The United States Department of Census meaning of the term "rural" is used. That is, any community with a population under 2500.

veyance, it is quite obvious that there are too many churches.

Because of the heavy migration trend of the rural Negro population between the ages of thirty to forty-five, the churches are growing weaker each day. The majority of the increases reported in church membership are the teenagers who join the churches during the revival period of each year.

In the second place, from the standpoint of ministerial services which they are able to secure, there are too many churches. The small memberships and poor financial strength restrict more of these churches to once-a-month preaching services. The large number of rural churches in the county necessarily causes the average membership per church to fall under average, in many cases. When churches do not have enough people to support them, it is only natural that their members suffer from overstrain and lack of organization. Then, too, the per capita operating expenses are appreciably more than those of large congregations. As Mays and Nicholson put it in The Negro's Church, "Economically the Negro is unable to adequately support so many enterprises doing essentially the same thing. This economic strength which is apparently spread out so thinly over this wide area, may bring larger returns if it is concentrated in fewer but better churches."<sup>2</sup>

The salary of the minister in the Negro rural churches of Laurens County is extremely low, yet the cost of his services is a heavy burden

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<sup>2</sup> Benjamin E. Mays and Joseph W. Nicholson, The Negro's Church, Institute of Social Religious Research, Friendship Press, 1931, p. 19.

to the community. The average membership of the rural churches in the county is ninety-eight members. (See Figure 6.)

Instead of struggling and competing to survive, these churches may do well to unite, possibly on one of the plans of church cooperation suggested below.

After overchurching, the most serious cause of the poor status of the Negro rural churches in Laurens County is the shifting of farm population and the concomitant trend of rural people and institutions to towns or cities.

Tenancy is another great cause of the decline of the rural church. Tenants move from farm to farm and from community to community making a move unstable church community.

The tenancy rate among Negroes of Laurens County is very high, 88.8 per cent. According to Paul Landis, "when the tenancy rate exceeds 20 per cent in any given locality the church begins to decline."<sup>3</sup> Laurens County's per cent (88.8) among Negroes is more than four times the figure of 20 per cent.

Since all of the rural Negro churches of Laurens County are of one denomination, except three, the Enlarged Parish Plan may be suggested as most helpful. In the enlarged parish the following characteristics are found: (1) the pastoral charge is enlarged to meet the social and economic conditions of the times; (2) the churches are combined to provide a large enough membership to carry on an effective program, and to reach the

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<sup>3</sup>Paul H. Landis, Rural Life In Process  
McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1948, p. 352.

unchurched persons in areas between parishes.

The enlarged parish is quite popular in the midwestern farming states. Many denominations use it; however, each group has its own name for it: the Methodists call it a "circuit," the Congregational Christians call it the "yoked field," the Disciples of Christ call it "pastoral unity," and the Presbyterians call it the "larger parish." There are two general types of enlarged parishes, the centralized and the decentralized.

The centralized parish is composed of a central place of worship to which members come from outlying areas. In smaller communities which support the central church there may be smaller places of worship in which lay preachers assist the pastor in bringing adequate leadership. The church furnishes transportation where it is needed, and the principal activities of the parish are carried on at the central place of worship.

The decentralized parish would be more ideally suited for the rural churches of Laurens County than the centralized parish, because practically all of the churches in the county are of the same denomination (Baptist). In the centralized parish the churches are usually of the same denomination, employ one pastor, have a co-operative centrally-planned program, and jointly provide a parsonage for the pastor. This arrangement is also very similar to the "circuit," so familiar to the Methodists.

The decentralized type of the enlarged parish is also suggested because of the multiplicity of rural Baptist churches in the county. Intra-denominational cooperation would perhaps be helpful, but is not suggested because of the autonomy of the Baptist churches. Without a

central form of government, (as is found in all episcopal-type churches), any other type of enlarged parish plan would be ineffective.

The decentralized type of enlarged parish would enable the rural churches to provide adequately for a well-trained minister. Provisions for a parsonage and other facilities that are usually provided for urban ministers could be made available, thereby maintaining a full-time pastor. Instead of the usual once-a-month preaching services the churches would have preaching services at least twice per month. Many activities of the churches and of the communities could be sponsored jointly, thus providing mutual cooperation and understanding of common problems. Indeed, this type of "Enlarged Parish Plan" could be the means of new life and health to the rural churches of the county.



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QUESTIONNAIRE

- I. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_
- II. Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_
- III. Name of present churches:
- A. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. \_\_\_\_\_
- IV. How many years have you served these churches: A. \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.  
B. \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. C. \_\_\_\_\_ yrs. D. \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.
- V. Miles from churches: A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_ D. \_\_\_\_\_ E. \_\_\_\_\_
- VI. Circle the figures which indicates the number of churches you presently pastor: 1 2 3 4 5
- VII. Approximate salary from churches: A. \_\_\_\_\_ B. \_\_\_\_\_ C. \_\_\_\_\_
- VIII. Education: Circle number of years completed
- Grammar School: 4 5 6 7 8
- High School: 1 2 3 4
- College: 1 2 3 4
- Seminary 1 2 3
- IX. Do you have a trade or occupation besides pastoring \_\_\_\_\_?
- X. Present church membership: Church (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_
- Is the membership increasing \_\_\_\_\_, or decreasing \_\_\_\_\_
- Reasons for the increase or decrease \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_